

### ***What is Food Defense?***

Food Defense is the means of preventing or eliminating the deliberate contamination of food by biological agents, toxins, chemicals, radiation, or a physical object. Prevention is the most important aspect of food defense.

Threats to food defense might occur at any level in the food-supply chain. These attacks are focused on a specific food item, process, company, or business. Attacks may be done by a variety of individuals such as, individuals posing as customers, employees/former employees, vendors, competitors, political ideologists, organized terrorist or activist groups, lone “copycat” individuals, criminals, or anyone with an agenda. The motivations for such attacks vary greatly and include, but are not limited to, financial gain, thrill/challenge, prestige, revenge, publicity, chaos, competitive advantage, or political reasons.

A lack in food defense may have devastating repercussions for a company. Food contamination can result in widespread illnesses or even death of the consumer(s), law proceedings, distrust in the product, company, regulators, and even the industry.

### ***What does the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) do related to Food Defense?***

In 2002, ISDH entered into a Public Health Preparedness and Response to Bioterrorism Cooperative Agreement and received bioterrorism funding from the Federal Centers for Disease Control. ISDH conducts food defense assessments for Indiana food manufacturers. The ISDH Food Protection Program has Food Defense Program Coordinators who have been developing and implementing these assessments. Any findings are completely confidential documents under IC 5-14-3-4(19) and are not public record.

The Food Defense Program Coordinators manage the Indiana Food Safety and Defense Task Force and are constantly working to raise awareness of food defense related issues. If you have any questions feel free to contact the ISDH Food Defense Program Coordinators. We are willing to answer any questions or concerns and to come visit your program to meet everyone and discuss food defense. We have extensive contacts with Indiana and the United States Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other local partners who are aware and vigilant of food defense issues and concerns.

Food Defense Program website: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/20994.htm>

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